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have been driven back to their own soil and the territories of France and Belgium and Servia have been returned to their rightful heirs.

The Fourth Liberty Loan will succeed because the men and women of America are resolved to take advantage of the co-operative effort now under way in behalf of a better social order based on law and morals, not only for the enduring benefit of England, the United States and France, but of Central Europe and the world beyond.

SHOULD WE HAVE ACCEPTED THE AUSTRIAN PROPOSAL?

THE persistent and inevitable effort by the European Central Powers to bring about a cessation of hostilities by some form of negotiation has developed apace. Fehrenbach, President of the German Reichstag, said September 18, "No one need doubt that the Chancellor is determined to bring about a peace by understanding." The recent evolution of this effort significantly parallels the development of the Foch military initiative and the increasing power of the American military forces abroad. It is true that statesmen of both groups of belligerents have many times in the past declared their willingness to begin peace negotiations, but there has been apparent a wide difference in the quality of the declarations. The German statements, not only by members of the German Reichstag but by the German and Austro-Hungarian foreign secretaries, have during these months revealed an increasing anxiety. Mr. Asquith's measured statement of May 16 last called attention to the fact that the British Government had "closed no door to overtures in the direction of an honorable peace." In reply, Herr von Kuhlmann remarked with equal restraint, "we can make this pronouncement our own, word for word." Count Burian was speaking calmly, as late as June 10, of his "readiness to peace," and Dr. Leo Lederer firmly added that no new peace offers to the enemy could be expected "so long as the leading statesmen in the enemy countries hold to the views which were represented but yesterday at the banquet in London by Mr. Lloyd George." Indeed, as late as June 22, Count Burian spoke to the Vienna Labor Council with little sign of anxiety of his willingness to discuss "a peace acceptable and honorable for both parties."

The great German Drive, begun March 21, 1918, was at that time nearing its end. It had not failed; indeed, the great offensive in the Rheims sector of July 15 was then being carefully planned by the Germans. But the prospects of taking Paris or the Channel Ports were no

longer bright. The interest in negotiations therefore increased, and a disposition to welcome mediation by a neutral government began to appear in the German and Austro-Hungarian press, and, because of the activities of a small group in Holland, even in the Swiss press.

Since the failure of the German offensive and the cumulative success of the drive of the Entente begun July 18, the interest in peace by negotiation has increased perceptibly in Central Europe, especially since the early days of September. The movement began with the announcement from Rotterdam, September 8, that it was on the way. Then came the endorsement of President Wilson's principles by the President of the Hungarian Independent Party, the acceptance of the idea of a League of Nations by Count Czernin, and a peace speech to German newspaper men at Vienna by the Austria-Hungarian Foreign Minister. Then followed the pronouncements by Von Payer, the Kaiser, Von Hertling, Herr Erzberger, and others. The speech of the Kaiser, September 12, to the Krupp munition workers at Essen, because of its homiletic passion showed unmistakably the fear at the heart of the German people. The same note is discernible in the other pleas. On the other hand, the same day that the Kaiser was feverishly trying to convince his laborers that he had left no stone unturned to shorten the war as far as possible, and that it was continued because of the "envy" and "hatred" of the enemies of Germany, Mr. Lloyd George was telling the people of Manchester that "nothing but heart failure on the part of the British Government can prevent our achieving a real victory." This was the day that the German Imperial Vice-Chancellor, Friedrich von Payer, in an address at Stuttgart, speaking of the German right to "indemnification," said: "We prefer, on calm reflection, and even with our own favorable military situation, to abandon this idea."

But even as late as this the Vice-Chancellor insisted that the German colonies must be restored; that the treaties which Germany had signed with Ukraine, Russia, and Roumania would not be submitted to the Entente Powers; and he spoke with no little assurance about Poland and Russia and Finland. Then came the other peace proposals, ending with the Austrian note of September 16.

The only demand for "peace by negotiation" in this country, so far as we know, has come from that wing of the Socialist party to which belongs Prof. Scott Nearing, candidate for Congress from the 14th District of New York. One plank in Professor Nearing's platform reads, "That the American Government take the necessary steps toward the holding of an international conference for the purpose of bringing about an early,

democratic, and permanent peace." Elsewhere, under some such title as "An Allied Political Offensive," we find pleas for a greater allied political program which in some instances squint towards a peace by negotiation. It is true, also, that there is no little American interest in the program of the British Labor party and that of the Inter-Allied Socialist and Labor Conference, which we are assured have been favorably received by a number of the social democrats of Germany and Austria-Hungary. The arguments put forward in these proposals are, in the main, that if we are to bring about the repudiation of secret treaties; the abandonment of the dangerous pleas for an economic war after the war; if we are to bring about a weakening of the German morale, necessary, it is argued, to the winning of this war, we must aid the democratic forces in the Central Empires, first, by getting politically closer together ourselves, and, second, by discussion and negotiation, if need be, with representatives of the enemy powers in some such way as urged by Von Burian or as suggested early in June by certain members of the Dutch Second Chamber. It is noteworthy, too, that this position has been taken more or less definitely from time to time by such various elements as those represented by Mr. Henderson, of the British Labor Party; by Mr. Ramsay-Macdonald and Mr. Snowden; by Mr. Troelstra in Holland; by the Defeatist Socialists of France, and others. It has been revealed in the spider efforts of such men as Harden and Scheidemann in Germany.

These views cannot, however, be said to represent the views of organized labor, for the American Federation of Labor does not subscribe to them. Mr. Gompers, who is now in England, is directly opposed to them. Neither can the views be said to represent the views of Socialists, who seem to be quite hopelessly divided. But, above all, the views do not represent the constructive pacifists.

Our own opinion is that the Austrian note of September 16 is a sad example of ineptitude, of inexcusable ignorance of international affairs, if not of stupid insincerity, of a whine for a way out. It is not true, as Von Burian says, that there has been "a lessening of distance between the viewpoints" of the belligerent groups. It is not true, as he says, that the "fundamental basis of the universal peace is to some extent agreed upon." It is not true that the Central Powers "are merely fighting to defend the integrity and safety of their territories." It is not true that "the desire for a compromise peace has been enormously strengthened." It is not true that an exchange of views such as he proposes "could be but beneficial to the cause of peace." It is not true that the United States is concerned with any "deep-rooted misunderstandings that might be dis-

pelled." The "deep-rooted misunderstandings" do not exist. It is not true that the situation facing the world "seems to demand a compromise to bring this awful war to an end." But, above all, it is not true, and it is surpassing strange that Austria does not know that it is not true, that the United States can stoop to enter any "confidential non-binding conversation over the fundamental principles of a peace that could be concluded." On the 31st of August, President Wilson proclaimed that "We solemnly purpose a decisive victory of arms . . . in vindication of the great cause at whose summons every true heart offers its supreme service." Austria should have known, as all the world knows, that we can engage in no secret conversation whatsoever. The proposal of December, 1916, and those of the spring and summer of 1917, and their reception, should have taught the Central Powers that the United States can enter upon no vague and mysterious course. Austria-Hungary began the war. There was an opportunity for negotiation, even of concession, before she struck at Serbia in 1914. If there has been any time when such negotiation would have been possible since that ruthless procedure, that time is now past. The Central Powers have waited too long.

There can now be no confusion about the meaning of this war. Mutual concessions or accommodations are now impossible. The issue at stake is no longer the issue of August, 1914. The issue now is the issue between organized forces of wrong against the organized forces of right, of insanity against sanity, of fear against peace. The whole world is vitally concerned in such a contest. The brute force of the *Faustrecht* is in irreconcilable conflict with the brute force of civilization. That the brute force of civilization is now greater than the brute force of the *Faustrecht* is no reason why the cry for compromise out of Central Europe should be heeded. Quite the contrary. These two highly conflicting machines, representing two ideals in mortal conflict, cannot stop until one or the other is broken and impotent. Any other solution now would be a calamity to countless generations.

It is a question of the rights of peoples or the claims of dynasties. That is the issue. That question must be decided. We believe that Belgium must be restored; that Alsace and Lorraine must be returned; that any injustices along the northern boundary of Italy must be rectified; that Serbia and Roumania must be independent, and that the security of Greece must be guaranteed. We believe in the independence of the Jugo-Slavs, of the Czecho-Slovaks, of Finland, and of Poland. We believe that Russia must be released from the fangs of Germany. We believe that the Dardanelles must be a free waterway to all. We believe that the Balkans must

be taught the eternal principles at the basis of the rights and duties of nations. We believe that Palestine should never again be controlled by Turkey, and that Christians throughout Asia Minor shall not be persecuted any more. We believe that Germany has committed a great sin, and that she must atone for that sin. With Lloyd George, we believe that the destiny of the human race hangs upon the issue of this war, and that therefore it must be prosecuted in no half-hearted way. We believe that the four powers of Central Europe are offenders, and that the rest of the world are defenders, and that offenders and defenders are not of equal merit. We believe that war must never again be the goal and holy purpose of a State. We believe that just governments are but the instruments of men and women. We believe that war by imperial edict must be made forever impossible. We believe that Germany must come, purged of her military autocracy and egotistic will to dominate, penitent to the feet of our common humanity as a suppliant, and in all sincerity and humility. While these are some of the things we believe, there is one thing we know—that is, that we cannot compromise with the hideous thing we are arrayed against. Justice, the peace and prosperity and happiness of all the world, demand but one thing for that—that it be overcome and forever abolished. The reply of the President of the United States to the Austrian verbiage, because of its promptness, brevity, and point, stands forth, therefore, the most significant and hopeful single utterance since the war began.

THE WAY OUT OF THE RUSSIAN TERROR

REIGNS of terror like pneumonia and typhoid fever are self-limiting diseases. The reign of terror in Russia will run its course—already frightful enough—but run its course it will.

There is no doubt about the existence of a reign of terror in Russia; the symptoms are appalling. The "Law of the Suspects" which during the French Revolution resulted in the execution of Marie Antoinette and of countless nobles, former office holders and distinguished representative persons without pretense of trial, is in full force under the Soviet régime. Through the darkness our government gives us glimpses of a man named Peters, head of the extra commission against counter-revolution, signing death warrants without so much as reading the papers. Robespierre and his "Republic of Virtue," the "Law of 22 Prairial" which abolished all semblance of defense for prisoners, were mere bagatelles compared with this modern "Committee of Safety" now struggling for power among the ruins of the Russian

Empire. One hundred twenty-five years ago France was to all appearances at the point of death. She was saved from that fate only by the greeds and jealousies among the powers arrayed against her. In the meantime internal oppressions developed through intermittent activities of the mob into an organized and official terror following the murder of Dr. Marat by Charlotte Corday. And yet opportunities were found for rebuilding the French defense and for ultimately breaking the coalition against her. The case of Russia is not exactly parallel, but here as in France blood lust will die of satiety, the Russian people will get hold of their government, and this strange outbreak will take its place in history along side that of 1793-94.

The President of the United States has done well to address our representatives to our allies and to neutral countries calling attention to the horrors of the Russian situation. Such a step was demanded by the nature of the case. The innocent thousands shot or in prison in Moscow, Petrograd, and other cities, appeal to the sympathies of the civilized world.

But the United States has done more than simply to call attention to the internal affairs of Russia, and to evince disapproval. The United States has sent troops to Russia, not for the purpose of interfering with her political sovereignty, not as an intervention, not as an impairment to her territorial integrity, but for the sole purpose of aiding the Russian people to regain control of their own land and destiny, which purposes are clearly seconded by Japan. The hope is that by economic, financial and technical help the Russian people will be able to do this. The program must be more concrete than words and by such means we have no doubt it will be. There are oppressed nationalities within the former Russian empire which must be dealt with to the end that the oppression shall cease. There is the labor problem prevalent throughout the world, but markedly so in Russia. But more important still is the agrarian situation threatened by feudal over-lordship on the one hand, and by the confiscation of property on the other. What should be done by us toward the solution of these problems cannot be foretold with precision. The whole situation is complicated by the fact that we have already loaned many millions of dollars to Russia and that the Bolsheviki régime has repudiated the securities. The hope here is that the repudiators may represent a minority of the Soviet government, which Professor Harper tells us is supported but by five per cent of the Russian population. We hope it is true that the constituent assembly, which represents three-quarters of that portion of the Russians in control of public opinion, is continuing to meet in secret and that with the assistance from the United States, Japan, Great Britain, and the